

[CONCLUDED FROM LAST WEEK.]  
**CATCHING A BUTTERFLY.**

Floy, frozen with horror, knelt silently a moment, gazing at the pale face and rigid form beneath. Her head swam, her heart grew sick. Was he dead? How stiff and still he lay! She burst into loud cries of entreaty and self-reproach.

"O, John—John! are you dead? Look up, for God's sake! O, wicked girl that I was, not to speak. Help—help!" she shrieked, wildly.

Slowly the heavy eyes unclosed. With infinite pain, John turned his head a little. "Who's that?" he said, faintly.

"O, thank God! cried Floy, joyfully, springing to her feet. "I'll be back in a moment."

John muttered something she did not understand. Going a little distance, she began to descend the steep path leading down the bank. It was ticklish work, even for our light footed Floy, and, half way down, she slipped, fell, and rolled ignominiously the rest of the way. John uttered a brief ejaculation, but Floy was up in an instant, scratched and bruised, her white dress black with mud, but otherwise uninjured. Scarcely pausing for breath, she bounded to John's side.

"O, Mr. Durham, are you much hurt?" she asked, in tremulous tones, as she knelt beside him. John opened his eyes again, and fixed them on her with a bewildered stare, a moment. Then, with another low groan, he tried to raise himself.

"Don't move—don't move!" entreated Floy. "O, your poor head—how it bleeds! There's a brook near by; I'll be back in a moment."

Taking up his cap, she bounded off in the direction of the stream. Dipping her handkerchief in the water, and filling the cap, she darted back to John's side.

"Now, let me see this poor head," she said; and, sitting down, she took it gently on her knee. Poor child! she was little used to wounds and bruises; the very sight of the flowing blood made her tremble from head to foot. But she controlled herself bravely, and with what simple skill she possessed, bathed his head and face, and bound up the former carefully with two handkerchiefs. Then she paused a moment, looking down with womanly tenderness at the pale face on her knee. How helpless he lay—the great, strong fellow—as helpless as little infant, almost! She felt a great rush of pity and tenderness toward him.

"Thank you," said John, faintly. The fresh, cool water had somewhat revived him.

"O, don't thank me," said Floy, hurriedly. "You are in dreadful pain, aren't you?"

"Yes; it's my ankle," muttered John. "I'm afraid it's broken. Where are all the rest, Miss Floy?"

"The dear knows!" said Floy, clasping her little hands in distress. "Hurry, Kate—help, O help!"

"It's no use," she said, after waiting a moment. "I must go in search of them again. But first let me look at this poor ankle, Mr. Durham."

"No—no," said John, a little fretfully. "What can you know about broken bones, child?"

"But I might make it feel a little easier," gently persisted Floy.

"If you could slit the boot down from the top," said John, his brow contracted with agony. "Here's my knife."

Floy took the knife, and, following his directions, carefully slit the boot from the top to the bottom, on both sides. Then, with a hand still slightly tremulous from the operation, she gently removed the remains of the boot.

"Ah, that is a relief!" said poor John. Great drops of agony were standing on his brow, and Floy softly wiped them away. He looked up gratefully into her face, smiling for the first time. "What a nice little nurse you are, Miss Floy!" he said.

Floy rose, blushing a little, and folding her soft, white shawl into a sort of a pillow, placed it under his head. "And now I will go for more efficient help," she said, turning away.

"Certainly," said Floy, returning. "What is it?"

"Just see," said John, with a faint groan, "if that butterfly is anywhere about. I'm sure I had my hands on it. I only hope it isn't crushed to pieces."

"The ruling passion!" muttered Floy, as she turned away. "Lying there half dead, with a broken ankle, and he can still think of that miserable insect."

"Here he is," she said aloud, coming round to John's side. "Horrid little thing!" she could not help adding, with a vindictive look at the innocent insect she placed in John's open palm.

John gave her a slightly surprised look, but smiled with pleasure as he surveyed the treasure in his hand. "It is safer. And, O Miss Floy, would you first do me one more favor, please?"

"Certainly," said Floy, returning. "What is it?"

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"The ruling passion!" muttered Floy, as she turned away. "Lying there half dead, with a broken ankle, and he can still think of that miserable insect."

"And a broken ankle into the bargain," thought Floy, turning away, in mingled vexation and amusement. Now I must go."

"Hillo!" cried a shrill voice above them. Floy looked up, and saw a man standing on the bank opposite the one from which John had fallen. He was evidently a farmer—a tall, wiry looking specimen—dressed in coarse blue clothes, and an immense straw hat. "What on earth's the matter?" shouted he.

"O, sir," cried Floy, springing joyfully forward, "do—do bring some help, and take this gentleman away from here!"

The light blue eyes stared blankly down into the ravine a moment. "How in thunder did he get down that?" was his next question, in a tone of the utmost astonishment.

"Fall down, of course," said Floy, impatiently.

"Lost the use of his eyesight, hasn't he?" responded the farmer.

"No!" said Floy, grinding her little teeth with rage and anxiety. "How many more questions are you going to ask, you inhuman man, before coming to his assistance? I tell you, his leg's broken."

"Well, I swan!" said the farmer, turning slowly away. "I'll be back in a moment."

"I've sent little Dan," said he returning, "to bring some help. He won't be gone long; he's got the wagon, and the doctor lives only a couple o'miles from here."

Floy ground in spirit, but resolving to be patient for John's sake, mildly entreated the farmer to seek out "their friends."

"Friends? Yes marm: so soon as I examined this here leg. It's broke just above the ankle, marm."

"Knew that before you told us," snapped Floy.

"You seem kind o' riled, marm. Yes, as I was saying, it's broke just above the ankle marm."

"Well, I must try and make him a little more comfortable! this hot sun shines right in his face," said Floy, with a compassionate look at the poor tortured fellow. Pressing Farmer Stokes into the service, she made him strip several armsful of green branches from the adjoining trees. Stripping her parasol in the ground, she disposed the branches over and around it, in such a manner that it formed a shady bower above her patient's head.

"Ah, how refreshing that is!" gasped poor John. "And now, do go under the shade of the trees, Miss Floy: your poor little face will be burned to a coal."

"O, no; I have on my broad brimmed hat," said Floy. Seating herself near the entrance of the green tent, she waved a long bough to keep away the flies. John watched her, a dreamy tenderness over all his closed eyes. What a darling she was, after all, with her round, child's face, and sweet, womanly ways!

"You are too kind to the cross old bear, Miss Floy," he said, suddenly; "too good to him, altogether."

"O, don't speak so," said Floy, coloringly. I wanted to ask your forgiveness for all my impertinence the last two weeks."

John's answer was prevented by the return of Farmer Stokes, who, after a very short and ineffectual attempt to find "their friends," again intruded upon them what some unwellcome presence.

"Can't find 'em nowh'r," he said. "Keep that ankle well kivered up, miss: and her's drop o' somethin''ll put a leetle life into him maybe."

John drank from the farmer's flask, and seemed somewhat revived by the draught. Floy resumed her ministrations. The farmer, laying back upon the grass, watched them with speculative eyes. "Darn it all," he burst out, "how did you git down here, mister? I'm glad if I can make it out at all."

"Well, if you must know," said Floy, petulantly, "he was looking for something."

"Pocket-book, eh?"

"No."

"Gold-headed cane?"

"No; specimen," said Floy, impatiently producing it. "This gentleman is a naturalist, and, in trying to secure this, he lost his footing and fell."

She held the "specimen" out in her little, soft palm. The farmer surveyed it in blank amazement.

"That?" he asked, incredulously. Floy nodded. Mr. Stokes sat silent a moment, while a broad grin slowly overspread his leathery countenance. "A miller!" he exclaimed, at last, with a long, low whistle.

"It's a butterfly," said Floy, indignantly.

"So I perceive, marm," said the farmer.

"Wal, I swan."

After this brief ejaculation, he bent forward, and, pointing to John, whose eyelids had again closed, he said, in a low whisper, "How long since he lost the use of his wits, marm?"

"He hasn't lost them at all," said Floy, staring. "You do ask me the queerest questions."

"Why you just said he was a natural, didn't you?"

"No; I said a naturalist," said Floy, choking down a little laugh, as she answered him.

"Wal," responded the farmer, after a pause, "I don't zactly take your meanin'.

"It's a curious specimen."

"No, miss, I don't understand," said the farmer. "It's a very keurious business, altogether."

The dry tone in which he said this, and the manner in which he eyed them both as he rose to his feet, nearly upset Floy's gravity again. And glancing at John, she saw the corners of his pale mouth twitching suspiciously, too.

"You don't understand," said Floy, indignantly.

"It's a great relief!" said poor John.

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"Wal, I reckon I'll try and find your friends agin," His tone said plainly, "I think you need friends to look after you."

"O, there they are now!" cried Floy, springing to her feet. Harvey—dear Harvey—how glad I am to see you!" Her voice broken in sobs. She was fairly overcome with her long excitement and the sudden relief of my presence.

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